



**Court Information Office
Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building
361 Rowe Boulevard
Annapolis, Maryland
410-260-1488**

[Press Release homepage](#)

For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Darrell S. Pressley
Sally Rankin
(410) 260-1488

Bessie M. Decker Named Clerk of Maryland Court of Appeals

(Annapolis, MD — April 1, 2008) Bessie M. Decker has been appointed as Clerk of the Maryland Court of Appeals. Decker will succeed Alexander L. Cummings, who is retiring after serving as the Clerk of the state's highest court since 1983. Chief Judge Robert M. Bell announced the appointment, made by the judges of the Court of Appeals. Decker will be sworn in today by Gov. Martin O'Malley.

Decker has served in the Court of Appeals Clerk's Office since 1984 and as its chief deputy since 1999. She has served as the acting Clerk since May 2007. With this appointment, Decker will become the Maryland Court of Appeals' 26th Clerk since the position was authorized in 1780, and the first female Clerk.

"The Court is delighted with this appointment," Judge Bell said. "I know that Bessie will continue the outstanding work that Alex Cummings has done. He has been an invaluable part of the Court of Appeals, and we have been honored to have him serve here. Having benefitted from his example and tutelage, Bessie can be expected to bring the same level of dedication to the position, and deliver the same high quality work and provide the highest quality of service."

The Clerk of the Court of Appeals maintains the docket, receives briefs and transcripts of cases filed with the Court of Appeals, and maintains official custody of Court decisions, Acts of the General Assembly, and other records required to be filed with the Court.

Decker is an associate member of the Maryland State Bar Association and serves as secretary of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks. She has been a member of the conference since 1999 and has served on its board since 2004. In 2007, Decker was a faculty member with the Maryland Institute for the Continuing Professional Education of Lawyers (MICPEL).

"I have the highest respect for Mr. Cummings, for all his accomplishments and the service that he has provided for the Court of Appeals and the Judiciary," said Decker. "It has been an honor to work for him, and I hope to continue to meet the high standard that he established. I am thrilled to work with such a dedicated group of professionals in this office."

Decker and her family reside in Chester.

#

For more information, contact the Court Information Office at (410) 260-1488. Photos of Decker are also available upon request.